



Illinois Department of Transportation

Illinois Chapter of



Illinois State Board of Education

“Life Behind the Cones and Barrels” How Roadway Workers Keep America Moving

Classroom Discussion Tips

Facts:

- Work zones have orange barrels and cones, workers wearing lime green vests, and large equipment moving around the site.
- Work zones are important – they are needed to upgrade and maintain our roadways. These upgrades make our roads safer and they ease congestion.
- Drivers can expect roughly one work zone for every 50 miles traveled.
- Over one thousand people die each year as a result of accidents in roadway work zones. The majority of those deaths involve drivers.
- Accidents can be immediately prevented by slowing to posted speed limits and focusing on what is ahead inside the orange barrels.
- If you are caught speeding in a work zone, three things can happen:
 - You get a speeding ticket that can be very costly
 - You go to court
 - You cannot drive for 3 months
- Photo speed enforcement means you can get a work zone speeding ticket in the mail with your picture on it.

Exercises:

- Students may observe roadway work zones for a period of time, then discuss with the class the various types of roadway workers they recognized (i.e., flaggers, heavy equipment operators, laborers, etc.). Students can also draw the “safety signs” they observed and discuss what each sign means.

- Students can set up a roadway work zone in the classroom or on the playground. Students might observe various cones, barrels, signs, barriers and other devices used to maintain safety in work zones, then create their own replicas of these items. Alternatively, local highway departments may be pleased to provide authentic work zone safety devices for demonstration to students. Once the work zone is assembled, students might play the roles of roadway worker, driver and passenger to demonstrate wise and unwise behavior in a work zone. Students may wish to navigate the work zone on bicycles, skateboards, in-line skates, or by other means.
- Older students may take the enclosed “Why a Work Zone?” quiz, which examines why work zones exist and the types of critical work performed in various types of work zones.